1: Tew E-4 (no date) 1950 FT7 Yao FT7

All these peoples have in common the following points of social organization: matrilineal clans, matrilocal marriage, residence in small villages under independent chiefs or headmen. They have elaborate initiation schools with circumcision for boys, and initiation without an operation for girls. It is mainly by variations in the initiation rites that their cultures can be distinguished from one another. They also distinguish themselves by linguistic variations and by cicatrizations. This is the region of the *pelele*, or lip-ring, although Yao do not wear it.

THE YAO

TRIBAL AND SUB-TRIBAL GROUPINGS AND DEMOGRAPHY

NOMENCLATURE

The name of the tribe is spelt and pronounced in a variety of different ways: Yao, Ayo, Veiao, Hiao, Wahiao, Wahaiao, Wahyao, Ayawa, Myao, Achawa, Wajao, Adjao, Mujoa, Mujanos, Adsawa, Adsoa, Mudsau. Sometimes they are referred to by the name of one of the sections of the tribe or of one of the leaders: e.g. Amachinga, Amangoche, Massaninga (also spelt Amasaninga and Amazaninga), Chiwala, Katule, Kalenje, Mdeule.[1]

GROUPING

The Yao claim a hill called Yao, near Muembe, between the Rivers Lujenda and Luchilingo, as the original centre from which they dispersed. The main body of Yao is in Portuguese East Africa, and there are large settlements in Tanganyika and Nyasaland.

(*a*) *Portuguese East Africa.* The two main divisions of Yao in Portuguese East Africa are around Muembe and around Mtarika, on the Lujenda river.[2] Immediately south of the lower Ruvuma and at its mouth there are two smaller groups. The Yao occupy most of the territory between the Msinje, Luchilingo, and Ruvuma rivers in their upper courses.[3]

(*b*) *Tanganyika.* Yao entered Tanganyika Territory at two separate periods. In the 1850's they immigrated into Masasi, Chiwata, Newala, Tunduru districts and around Mikindani and Kyonga.[4] The other two groups are more recent comers: one (about 3,000), were taken as war-captives by the Ngoni in Songea district; the other (about 45,000), in the upper Lukuledi valley in Lindi district. They came in from Portuguese East Africa about 1912.[5]

(*c*) *Nyasaland.* There are four main groups of Yao:

(i) The largest group lives in the Southern Province, in upper Shire, and south Nyasa districts.

(ii) The second is near Blantyre, Chiradzulu, Zomba.

(iii) A small group is settled in a belt on the west coast of Lake Nyasa at Domira Bay.[6]

[1] Heckel, 1935, p. 7 n.; Hetherwick, 3, 1902, p. xviii; Abdullah, 1919; Burton, 1873, p. 81 n.
[2] *Handbook of Nyasa Co.*, 1898, p. 20.
[3] Johnson, W. P., 3, 1893.
[4] Weule, 1, 1909, p. 140.
[5] *Handbook of German East Africa*, pp. 56, 62.
[6] Murray, 1932, p. 246; Laws, 1934, p. 37; Hetherwick, 4, 1927, p. 185.

1: Tew E-4 (no date) 1950 FT7 Yao FT7

(iv) Another group is on the south-west side of the lake, north of the Ngoni at Dedza and east of the Ngoni of Ncheu district.[1]

Although these are the main concentrations of Yao, smaller communities are scattered through most of the districts of south Nyasaland.

MAP SHOWING MORE IMPORTANT SITES CONCERNED WITH YAO INFILTRATION

Distribution of Yao shown as a percentage of the population of each district (1931 Census)

Over 50%:	South Nyasa	75%	10–20%: Dedza 16%
	Upper Shire	60%	Dowa 8%
			Mlanje 6%
30–40%:	Blantyre	38%	Cholo 5%
20–30%:	Chiradzulu	26%	1–5%: Chikwawa 2%
	Zomba	26%	Ncheu 1·3%

History

Nothing is known of the history of the Yao before their settlement at Muembe.[2] Their contact with the Arab traders from the east coast had probably continued for 200 years before the Europeans arrived.[3] When Lacerda wrote in 1798 the Yao were

[1] Codrington, 1898, p. 512.
[2] Stannus, 4, 1922, p. 231; Heckel, 1935, p. 7; Murray, 1932.
[3] Livingstone in 1866 noted the strength of Arab influence.

2: Mitchell E-5 (1946-1949) 1956 FT7 Yao FT7

TABLE XX

WHEN INITIATION RIGHTS WERE GRANTED TO NEWCOMERS AND INVADERS

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643
554
881

Type of Initiation Right	By early Chiefs		By recent Chiefs*		Total
	Invaders	Newcomers	Invaders	Newcomers	
Both init. . .	8	6	3	2	19
One init. only .	9	10	3	14	36
Total . . .	17	16	6	16	55

* This is obviously a crude classification. I have taken roughly 35 years as the dividing line. As the early chiefs I have classified all the Kawingas before and including Kawinga V who died in 1913; all the Liwondes before and including Liwonde III who died in 1921; all the Ngokwes before and including Ngokwe IV who died in 1905; all the Mposas before and including Mposa II who died in 1913; and all the Chikweos before and including Chikweo II who died in 1914.

In other words, recent chiefs have been granting single initiation rights to Invaders in the same proportion as they have been granting both rights, but they have been granting Newcomer headmen the right to hold only one ceremony more often than the right to hold both. Of the six sets of rights to initiation ceremonies granted by recent chiefs to Invader headmen, three were rights to hold only one ceremony, while 14 of the 16 initiation rights granted to Newcomer headmen were for one ceremony only.[1]

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Headmen do not make use of their bonds of common religion or tribe with the chief in their competition for initiation rights. Table XXI sets out the numbers of headmen of different religion. There is a substantially smaller proportion of Pagan headmen (9·7 per cent) holding initiation ceremonies than either Christians (25·5 per cent) or Moslems (24·4 per cent).[2] Most Pagans, however, are also Newcomers so that this difference is actually a reflex of the generally lower rank of Newcomers. Table XXII sets out the number of headmen of the chief's tribe and of other

[1] i.e. 50·0 per cent against 87·5 per cent; diff. of per cent = 37·5; S.E. of diff. = 20·08; C.R. = 1·87; $p = 0·0614$.

[2] Pagans = 9·7 per cent; Others 24·6 per cent; diff of per cent = 14·9; S.E. of diff. = 7·94; C.R. = 1·88; $p = 0·0603$.

2: Mitchell E-5 (1946-1949) 1956 FT7 Yao FT7

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TABLE XXI

THE DISTRIBUTION OF INITIATION RIGHTS AMONG HEADMEN OF DIFFERENT RELIGIONS

Type of Initiation Holder	Moslem	Christian	Pagan	Total
Both init. rights . .	25	4	1	30*
Boys' init. rights only .	12	4	—	16
Girls' init. rights only .	31	6	2	39†
No init. rights . . .	211	41	28	280‡
Total	279	55	31	365

$n = 6$; $\chi^2 = 5{\cdot}05$; $p = 0{\cdot}53778$.

* Excludes 1 headman whose religion was unrecorded.
† Excludes 4 headmen whose religion was unrecorded.
‡ Excludes 2 headmen whose religion was unrecorded.

TABLE XXII

THE DISTRIBUTION OF INITIATION RIGHTS AMONG HEADMEN OF THE SAME AND DIFFERENT TRIBE AS THE CHIEF

Type of Initiation Holder	Same Tribe	Different Tribe	Total
Both init. holders	20	11	31
Boys' init. holders only . . .	7	9	16
Girls' init. holders only . . .	23	20	43
No init. rights	156	126	282
Total	206	166	372
% Init. holders	24·3	24·1	24·2

$n = 3$; $\chi^2 = 2{\cdot}17$; $p = 0{\cdot}54167$.

tribes who hold initiation rights. Once again the proportion of headmen of the same tribe as the chief who hold initiation rights is the same as that of headmen of different tribes from the chief. We may say, therefore, that membership of tribe is not an operative factor in the granting of initiation rights.[1]

[1] The factors contributing to the granting of initiation rights are obviously all intercorrelated.

8:Mitchell E-5 (1946-1947) 1949
[P.145B] FT7 Yao FT7

III. The Entry of the Whites

175 British started actively to pacify the country, the
648 sons of Mponda were at war with each other and Cingwalungwalu was on the way to dominating the whole of the west of the Shire River bank above the Murchison falls. After the British had demonstrated their efficiency by a few attacks on some of Nkata's forces, Kalembo approached the British leader and complained of the war in his territory. The British forces accordingly attacked and destroyed Cingwalungwalu's forces thereby leaving the way open for Kalembo to establish himself under the British wing as an important chief of the west bank of Lake Malombe. Amongst the chieftancies studied in this paper there appeared to have been no direct use of the British military forces in internal politics.[1] The Whites in this way immediately became a factor in tribal political organization. First of all some chiefs endeavoured to use the military force of the Whites directly in their tribal politics. Later on as military actions came to an end the power of the Whites continued to be tapped by chiefs and other personalities in the political structure in order to manipulate the tribal political set-up to their own advantage. In the main the power of the British Administration though still an active agent in tribal politics is now present as an abstract and invisible but nonetheless potent force. How this is done to-day I hope to be able to show by an analysis of the interaction of chiefs, African civil servants and village headmen.

101 As a foundation to this view of Yao politics,
175 the detailed history of the three chieftains Ka-
619 winga, Liwonde and Nyambi is illuminating.
643 Kawinga, Liwonde and Nyambi all belong to the same division of the Yao tribe, i.e. Macinga. There are about nine such divisions but only four are to be found in Nyasaland. The Acisi live near the Portuguese East African border in the Fort Johnston area (Katuli's area) and the

101 Amasininga in the Makanjila area of Fort Johns-
619 ton District, i.e. to the east of the south end of
the Lake near Fort Maguire. These two divisions
175 are insignificant when compared with the other
643 two divisions in Nyasaland. The third division
is the Mangoce Yao now settled around Blantyre,
while the last division, the Macinga, are settled
between Fort Johnston district and Zomba.
These divisions arose from a breaking up of the
Yao tribe which originally occupied the territory
between the Rovuma and Lujenda Rivers in what
is now Portuguese East Africa. These divisions
are not very significant to-day. Members of a
division recognize that they are more closely
related to each other than to the members of
another division, but this does not appear to
affect modern political life in any way.

619 The first Kawinga, Liwonde and Nkata[1]
175 all belonged to the Macinga division which had
settled near the tip of Lake Amaramba where it
551 empties into the Lujenda River. From this place
643 of origin, the groups associated with these early
leaders moved into Nyasaland. In addition to
belonging to the same division of the Yao tribe
the three leaders mentioned also had the same clan-
name, viz. *amberwe*.[2] The term that I have trans-
lated as clan-name is the Yao word *lukaryo*,
which may also be translated as "kind" or "sort".
Thus, if one asks a man the "kind" or "sort"
of Yao he is, his answer may refer to the major
divisions as above, i.e. Macinga or Mangoce
or it may refer to the clan-name. Clan-names are
inherited matrilineally, but holders of the same
name are unable to trace their descent from
a common ancestor. People with the same clan-
[582] names formerly did not marry but this prohibi-
tion has fallen away. For the commoners the
clan-name seems to have lost most of its signi-
ficance but it is carefully remembered in the royal
lines and lines in which the rank of a village head-
man is passed down.

643 The present Kawinga and the present Liwonde
551 can trace their descent matrilineally from a com-
175

9:Lawson Y-5 (ca. 1940)1949 FT7 Yao FT7
MARAVI FR4

[P. 180C]

and Yao tribes, who there predominate. These peoples seem to have come from different parts of the continent. Their languages, despite a common Bantu descent and much recent borrowing, remain as distinct as possible and are obviously not modern dialects of one more primitive tongue ; their original social structures must, however, have been similar enough to attract them to each other, for they have so intermarried and their customs so fused, that one can now scarcely distinguish their ways of life and village organization. Indeed, while homesteads of apparently pure Nyanja and Yao still predominate, every considerable district contains members of both tribes, with some people, at least, of mixed descent ; moreover, and although one perceive a difference of character and manners, and trace it to the influence of Mohammedanism on the Yaos, one may well be unconsciously exaggerating. This account of relationship terms, (with brief reference to underlying social structure), must be taken, therefore, to cover the fusion of two once-separate tribes, and Nyanja and Yao equivalents must—unless otherwise stated—be understood as identical in meaning. In fact, Nyanja often prefer Yao terms to their own.

How far can one isolate the Nyanja-Yao social structure in order to study it ? Ngoni immigrants in this district are few, and their original patrilineal social system has largely succumbed to the customs of these earlier comers. The matrilineal system of the still more recent and numerous Lomwe immigrants is, I believe, (though my evidence is fragmentary), exerting a considerable influence on the somewhat dissimilar but also matrilineal Nyanja and Yao.